

1. (Once Amended) An isolated polypeptide sequence selected from the group consisting of:

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- a) a polypeptide comprising an amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1,
 - b) a polypeptide comprising a naturally occurring amino acid sequence at least 90% identical to an amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1,
 - c) a biologically active fragment of a polypeptide having an amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1, and
 - d) an immunogenic fragment of a polypeptide having an amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1.

2. (Once Amended) An isolated polypeptide of claim 1, comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1.

14. A method for detecting a target polynucleotide in a sample, said target polynucleotide having a sequence of a polynucleotide of claim 12, the method comprising:

- a) hybridizing the sample with a probe comprising at least 20 contiguous nucleotides comprising a sequence complementary to said target polynucleotide in the sample, and which probe specifically hybridizes to said target polynucleotide, under conditions whereby a hybridization complex is formed between said probe and said target polynucleotide or fragments thereof, and
- b) detecting the presence or absence of said hybridization complex, and, optionally, if present, the amount thereof.

15. A method of claim 14, wherein the probe comprises at least 60 contiguous nucleotides.

16. A method for detecting a target polynucleotide in a sample, said target polynucleotide having a sequence of a polynucleotide of claim 12, the method comprising:

- a) amplifying said target polynucleotide or fragment thereof using polymerase chain reaction amplification, and
- b) detecting the presence or absence of said amplified target polynucleotide or fragment thereof, and, optionally, if present, the amount thereof.

17. A composition comprising a polypeptide of claim 1 and a pharmaceutically acceptable excipient.

18. (Once Amended) A composition of claim 17, wherein the polypeptide comprises an amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1.

19. A method for treating a disease or condition associated with decreased expression of functional PRAEP, comprising administering to a patient in need of such treatment the composition of claim 17

20. A method for screening a compound for effectiveness as an agonist of a polypeptide of claim 1, the method comprising:

- a) exposing a sample comprising a polypeptide of claim 1 to a compound, and
- b) detecting agonist activity in the sample.

21. A composition comprising an agonist compound identified by a method of claim 20 and a pharmaceutically acceptable excipient.

22. A method for treating a disease or condition associated with decreased expression of functional PRAEP, comprising administering to a patient in need of such treatment a composition of claim 21.

23. A method for screening a compound for effectiveness as an antagonist of a polypeptide of claim 1, the method comprising:

- a) exposing a sample comprising a polypeptide of claim 1 to a compound, and
- b) detecting antagonist activity in the sample.

24. A composition comprising an antagonist compound identified by a method of claim 23 and a pharmaceutically acceptable excipient.

25. (Once Amended) A method for treating a disease or condition associated with overexpression of functional PRAEP, comprising administering to a patient in need of such treatment a composition of claim 24.

26. (Once Amended) A method of screening for a compound that specifically binds to the polypeptide of claim 1, said method comprising:

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- a) combining the polypeptide of claim 1 with at least one test compound under suitable conditions, and
 - b) detecting binding of the polypeptide of claim 1 to the test compound, thereby identifying a compound that specifically binds to the polypeptide of claim 1.

27. A method of screening for a compound that modulates the activity of the polypeptide of claim 1, said method comprising:

- a) combining the polypeptide of claim 1 with at least one test compound under conditions permissive for the activity of the polypeptide of claim 1,
- b) assessing the activity of the polypeptide of claim 1 in the presence of the test compound, and
- c) comparing the activity of the polypeptide of claim 1 in the presence of the test compound with the activity of the polypeptide of claim 1 in the absence of the test compound, wherein a change in the activity of the polypeptide of claim 1 in the presence of the test compound is indicative of a compound that modulates the activity of the polypeptide of claim 1.

28. A method for screening a compound for effectiveness in altering expression of a target polynucleotide, wherein said target polynucleotide comprises a polynucleotide sequence of claim 5, the method comprising:

- a) exposing a sample comprising the target polynucleotide to a compound, under conditions suitable for the expression of the target polynucleotide,
- b) detecting altered expression of the target polynucleotide, and
- c) comparing the expression of the target polynucleotide in the presence of varying amounts of the compound and in the absence of the compound.

29. A method for assessing toxicity of a test compound, said method comprising:

- a) treating a biological sample containing nucleic acids with the test compound;
- b) hybridizing the nucleic acids of the treated biological sample with a probe comprising at least 20 contiguous nucleotides of a polynucleotide of claim 12 under conditions whereby a specific hybridization complex is formed between said probe and a target polynucleotide in the biological sample, said target polynucleotide comprising a polynucleotide sequence of a polynucleotide of claim 12 or fragment thereof;

- c) quantifying the amount of hybridization complex; and
- d) comparing the amount of hybridization complex in the treated biological sample with the amount of hybridization complex in an untreated biological sample, wherein a difference in the amount of hybridization complex in the treated biological sample is indicative of toxicity of the test compound.

46. A polypeptide of claim 1, comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1.

47. A polynucleotide of claim 12, comprising the polynucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:2.